

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6213

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 0601

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, US

SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY SOVIET REACTION TO MFN ANNOUNCEMENT

1. WHILE IT IS TOO EARLY FOR SOLID SOVIET COMMENT ON THE MFN-REJECTION, THE MESSAGE CONVEYED IN THE PRESS JANUARY 15 WAS THAT DETENTE IS PROCEEDING AS USUAL AND THAT THE SOVIET UNION REMAINS COMMITTED TO IT. THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE SALT RESUMPTION AND OF THE MID-FEBRUARY WILSON VISIT PERFORMED THE FIRST FUNCTION; THE KOSYGIN SPEECH AT THE WHITLAM DINNER PERFORMED THE SECOND. KOSYGIN REFERRED REPEATEDLY THERE TO THE NEED TO CONTINUE DETENTE (THOUGH WITHOUT REFERRING TO THE US). HE MENTIONED DETENTE SPECIFICALLY IN FOUR SEPARATE PARAGRAPHS (INCLUDING THE NEED TO MAKE IT IRREVERSIBLE) AND DISCUSSED IT INDIRECTLY IN FOUR OTHERS. IZVESTIYA THIS EVENING CARRIED THE TASS ACCOUNT OF THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENT (AVAILABLE ON TASS ENGLISH WIRE), INCLUDING HIS ASSERTION THAT EFFORTS WILL BE MADE TO OBTAIN LEGISLATION PERMITTING NORMAL TRADING RELATIONSHIPS.

2. PRAVDA DEPUTY EDITOR (AND US SECTION CHIEF) RATINANI, AT DINNER AT AN EMBOFF'S APARTMENT JANUARY 14 (SEVERAL HOURS BEFORE THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENT), EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF FURTHERING US-SOVIET RELATIONS. HE SAID THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF OUR RELATIONSHIP IS THE PREVENTION OF WAR. HE WAS VERY
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NEGATIVE ABOUT THE ECONOMIC ASPECT OF THE RELATIONSHIP, SAYING

THE SOVIET UNION COULD ACCEPT NEITHER MFN NOR CREDITS UNDER THE
CONDITIONS IMPOSED. HE CONTRASTED THE US WITH DEGAULLE'S
FRANCE; WHILE DEGAULLE COULD BE ROUGH WITH THE LEFT INTERNALLY,
HE PURSUED A CONSISTENT FOREIGN POLICY. WHY CAN'T THE US SEPARATE
ITS INTERNAL FROM ITS EXTERNAL POLICIES? RATINANI ALSO EXPRESSED
DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE PRESIDENT DID NOT VETO THE TRADE BILL.
FINALLY, HE EXPRESSED GREAT INTEREST IN SENATOR JACKSON'S POLITICAL
POSSIBILITIES. HE DID NOT REVEAL ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOVIET
MESSAGE ON MFN, IF INDEED HE KNEW ABOUT IT.
STOESSEL

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